

**Re-Make, Re-Model, Re-Define;  
Fashioning A Nation's Identity.**

*“Lessening resources and raw materials, significant volumes of historic pre-worn and waste garments and inefficient and ineffective ways to recycle garments and fabrics on a commercial scale”*

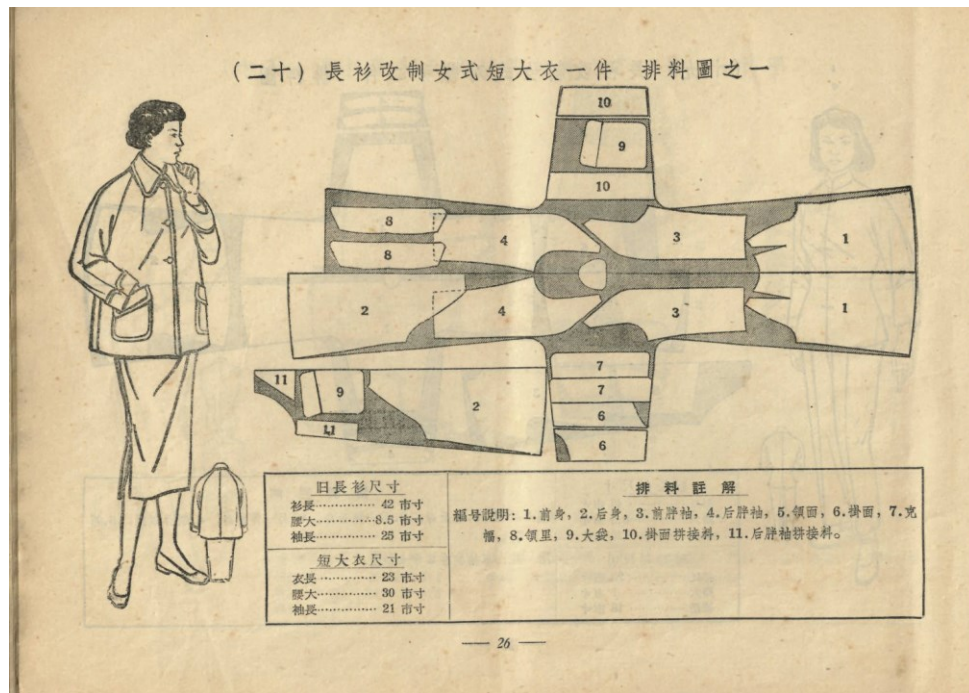
There has been much discussion and debate around the issues of sustainability that contemporary designers, manufacturers, retailers and the fashion buying public confront and the aforementioned quote may well have come from the Sustainable Clothing Action Plan Report issued by the UK Government through DEFRA (2011) as a serious issue that needs resolving.

Yet this quote forms the introduction to a 1959 Pattern cutting book, produced by the Shanghai Cultural Department in conjunction with the Shanghai Textile Company, entitled “New Clothes from Old Clothes”.



There are clear instructions, within the book, on the deconstruction and re-fashioning of the traditional men's changshan and women's qipao as well as western style suits and coats.

On one level this is a pragmatic exercise in recycling garments to support limited resources. Alternatively it is a complex political gesture, which aims to further reinforce ideologies by simultaneously dismissing European and Chinese culture.



Against the context of a century of unparalleled turmoil and seismic change for its population, clothing, in China, has acted as a representational and symbolic illustration of a society trying to define its own identity.

This paper and the visual presentation of artefacts, considers the content of the publication, both practically and stylistically and discusses its wider context in relation to the economic, social and political conditions which support the evolutionary fashioning of a nations identity.

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